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**LDF Applauds the House’s Passage of H.R.4,
the Voting Rights Advancement Act (VRAA)**

Today, the U.S. House of Representatives took an historic vote to fully restore the Voting Rights Act of 1965 through the passage of H.R.4, the Voting Rights Advancement Act (VRAA). Following months of hearings and other evidence-gathering, this important step toward enacting the VRAA is a critical advancement in restoring our broken democracy and protecting the rights of voters of color. The Supreme Court’s baneful 2013 decision in *Shelby County v. Holder* gutted a key provision of the 1965 Voting Rights Act that helped to prevent and deter racial discrimination in voting for nearly five decades. The VRAA revives key protections for voters and institutes new, modern-day measures to eliminate racial and language-based discrimination in the electoral process.

Janai Nelson, Associate Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) stated, “Since the *Shelby County* decision, we have seen a tremendous increase in voter suppression and other discriminatory behaviors toward Black voters. The VRAA responds directly to the Supreme Court’s invitation to update the Voting Rights Act to reflect current conditions in our elections. The protections contained in the VRAA will help ensure that all voters, and especially voters of color who are the targets of rampant voter suppression, are afforded equal and unfettered access to the democratic process.”

“Voting rights are not only a matter of civil rights, they are integral to our democracy. Our system cannot and must not tolerate laws that create multiple hurdles for racial minorities to participate in the political process,” said Lisa Cylar Barrett, the Director of Policy at LDF. “We applaud the U.S. House of Representatives for passing this important legislation and bringing us one step closer to restoring this cornerstone of democracy for all.”

LDF was instrumental in supporting the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965, has been involved in every legislative effort to update the Act, and has actively enforced it for over fifty years.

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Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation’s first civil and human rights law organization and has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF’s Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF.

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